

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

In re Flint Water Cases.

Judith E. Levy
United States District Judge

/

This Order Relates To:

ALL CASES

/

**ORDER REFERRING ASHLEE LIN TO THE STATE BAR OF
CALIFORNIA**

On May 13, 2024, the Court issued an order to show cause regarding its concern about attorney Ashlee N. Lin's role in a troubling public relations campaign against Co-Liaison Counsel for Individual Plaintiffs Corey Stern. Ms. Lin is the attorney for Actum, LLC, a public relations firm that has worked on behalf of Defendant VNA¹ and non-party VE² during this litigation. The Court explained that it would "refer Ms. Lin to the State Bar of California for it to consider whether she has violated her professional responsibilities under the applicable rules of

¹ Veolia North America, LLC, Veolia North America, Inc., and Veolia Water North America Operating Services, LLC.

² Veolia Environnement S.A.

professional conduct—unless cause is shown by May 20, 2024 at 12:00 PM that the referral is unwarranted.” (ECF No. 2953, PageID.99314.) On May 20, 2024, Ms. Lin timely submitted an ex parte letter to the Court by hand delivery to chambers. The Court cured the ex parte nature of the submission by placing the letter on the docket. (ECF No. 2965.) Ms. Lin’s letter was an inadequate response to the Court’s order; it lacked sufficient detail and substance. (ECF No. 2974, PageID.100106.) To explain these deficiencies, Ms. Lin made a blanket assertion that her professional obligations prevented her from disclosing attorney-client communications under the California Rules of Professional Conduct. (ECF No. 2965, PageID.99470.) Despite Ms. Lin’s failure to show cause that the Court should not refer her to the State Bar of California, the Court did not immediately refer Ms. Lin. Because Ms. Lin asserted that attorney-client privilege constrained her ability to respond, the Court gave Ms. Lin until May 29, 2024 at 12:00 PM to submit a privilege log to the Court. (ECF No. 2974, PageID.100106.)

On May 29, 2024, Ms. Lin sent an email to the Court stating that she declined to provide a privilege log or to submit to the Court’s jurisdiction. In her email, she did not assert that any professional

obligation prevented her from submitting a privilege log. Ms. Lin has failed to show cause why the Court should not refer her to the State Bar of California.

Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Ms. Lin is referred to the State Bar of California for it to determine whether Ms. Lin has violated her professional responsibilities under the applicable rules of professional conduct.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 30, 2024
Ann Arbor, Michigan

s/Judith E. Levy
JUDITH E. LEVY
United States District Judge

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that the foregoing document was served upon counsel of record and any unrepresented parties via the Court's ECF System to their respective email or first-class U.S. mail addresses disclosed on the Notice of Electronic Filing on May 30, 2024.

s/William Barkholz
WILLIAM BARKHOLZ